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ELON MUSK RESTORES TWITTER ACCOUNTS OF JOURNALISTS

It comes after 59% respondents of an online poll voted to restore the handles now instead of a week later

NO RELIEF FOR SCRIBE WHO INVESTIGATED TESLA

Though most of the suspended accounts were restored by Saturday evening, those of some journalists, including *Business Insider's* Linette Lopez and former *MSNBC* anchor Keith Olbermann, weren't. Lopez had published a series of articles between 2018 and 2021 highlighting alleged safety lapses at Tesla, which had angered Musk | P12

'CHILLING EFFECT ON THOSE COVERING MUSK'

- A "user query" account run by Twitter's Indian rival Koo was among those suspended and was yet to be restored
- The reverse action has not eased concerns though. *Vox* journalist Aaron Rupar said the suspension, though brief, will have a "chilling effect" on those covering Musk's businesses

3.69 million

PEOPLE TOOK PART IN MUSK'S ONLINE POLL ON RESTORING THE ACCOUNTS

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THIRD PARTY: Croatia celebrates after beating Morocco 2-1 in third-place play-off match on Saturday | AP

Bilkis loses one fight against 11 convicts in SC

Court dismisses plea to review May 13 order asking Gujarat to decide on their remission

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court has dismissed a plea filed by gangrape survivor Bilkis Bano seeking a review of the top court's May 13 verdict directing the Gujarat government to consider the premature release of the convicts under the state's remission policy, which doesn't prohibit the remission of rape, gangrape or murder convicts.

Bano had argued that the policy of Maharashtra, where the trial was held, would apply. A special CBI court in Mumbai had on January 21, 2008 sentenced the 11 convicts to life imprisonment. Their conviction was subsequently upheld by the Bombay High Court and the Supreme Court.

"In our opinion, there appears no error apparent on the face of record which may call for review of the judgement dated May 13, 2022... The review petition is accordingly dismissed," said a bench comprising judges Ajay Rastogi and Vikram Nath.

However, Bano's legal options are not over. She had filed two petitions, one of which has now been rejected. The other petition challenging release of the 11 convicts is still pending.

The SC is also already seized of a bunch of PILs filed by CPM leader Subhashini Ali, journalist Revati Laul, former vice-chancellor of Lucknow University Roop Rekha Verma and Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra against the release of the convicts.

Bano was 20 years and five months pregnant when she was gangraped and seven members of her family were massacred during the 2002 Gujarat riots.

All 11 convicts walked out of jail on August 15 after the Gujarat government allowed their premature release under its remission policy.

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CUP OF ECSTASY AWAITS FINAL CALL

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

AFTER four weeks, it all comes down to this. France v. Argentina for the right to be crowned world champions for the third time. To be honest, even in this World Cup that has seemingly produced surprises and shocks every other day, the identity of the two finalists isn't.

France have long replaced Brazil as talent hub of world football — they have reached five of the last 11 major finals they have competed in including in three WC finals since 1998. Thanks to immigration and football being a way of life for youngsters coming into France, a robust talent ID backed by one of the best footballing cultures at youth level, they have had no problems in producing a conveyor belt of talent that's the envy of the world.

Argentina haven't had an explosion of talent like France has had but they have a solid base and continuity. As skipper, Lionel Messi, has become more vocal while coach, Lionel Scaloni, has instilled plenty of belief. The side were on a 36-match unbeaten run when they landed in Qatar. Sure, they suffered a setback against Saudi Arabia but that belief and trust did not evaporate. There is also a sense of destiny in the way they have played.

Messi, in what is likely to be his last international competition, has rallied the troops and the players have responded to him. They have been running on fumes, physically and mentally exhausting themselves knowing full well a victory for them is also a win for Messi. A World Cup title is the only one missing from his overbrimming list of achievements. There is some legacy at stake for France too. They suffered lots of criticism after failing to live up expectations at last year's Euros. So, they have buckled down. Now, they are 90 minutes away from becoming the first since that famed 1958-62 Brazil team to achieve a repeat.

The match itself is likely to be a contrast of styles— France will be patient and content even without having the ball for large periods while Argentina will likely press more and be more vertical — but the match itself is too close to call.

Match live at 6.30pm | P15

JOURNEY ABORTED

AI denies boarding to poodle, family's vacay goes for toss

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

BENGALURU-based HR professional Sachin Shenoy's year-end trip to Punjab and Himachal Pradesh with his family and pet dog went completely haywire, after an Air India pilot refused to allow the poodle to board the flight. This, despite Fluffy being declared 'Fit to Fly' by the airline crew at the airport, and issued a Boarding Pass.

The dog, Fluffy, with her boarding pass at KIA in Bengaluru

Sachin Shenoy, wife Uma and daughter Aarya left their house in Varthur at 11.20am Saturday for their 5.10pm Air India flight (AI 503) to New Delhi. The distraught family returned home at 10.30pm with Fluffy and their baggage, and decided to cancel their 12-day vacation. It included Uma's birthday celebrations on December 25 at Dalhousie. The family had spent over Rs 4 lakh on travel and hotel bookings.

Shenoy told TNIE, "We had booked the tickets three months ago. I was constantly in touch with Air India staff on call and mail to discuss our 18-month-old pet. We have taken our poodle with us on many road trips, and never encountered problems anywhere. I was repeatedly told Air India is a pet-friendly airline, and I could take Fluffy in the cabin with me. So I booked through Air India," he explained. P2

Some GST offences decriminalised

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

THE GST Council on Saturday decided to decriminalise certain offences and doubled the threshold for launching prosecution under the tax law from ₹1 crore to ₹2 crore. It, however, retained the limit at ₹1 crore for fake invoicing. The offences of preventing an officer from discharging his duties, tampering of material evidence, and failure to supply information have now been decriminalised.

The Council's 48th meeting however, avoided discussions on key issues such as taxation on casinos, online gaming, horse-racing and discussion on GST Tribunals. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said only eight out of the 15 agenda items could be taken up due to paucity of time. She said no new taxes have been brought in. On the compensation cess on SUVs, the Council clarified that a higher rate of 22% cess is applicable to motor vehicles fulfilling all four conditions — it is popularly known as SUV, has engine capacity exceeding 1,500 cc, length exceeding 4,000 mm and a ground clearance of 170 mm or above.

The Council also said that 'no claim bonus' offered by insurance firms is an admissible deduction for valuation of insurance service and does not attract GST. It said the incentive paid to banks by the government under the scheme for promotion of RuPay debit cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions are in the nature of subsidy and, thus, not taxable.

EXPRESS INTAKE

Police permission must for Christmas, NY parties | P2

M'luru blast accused Shariq shifted to Victoria Hosp | P3

CM encouraging moral policing, says Siddu | P4

Govt to give ₹2L interest free loan to weavers | P5

MODERN LOVE MAGAZINE
WITH THIS ISSUE
PLUS 12 PAGES

EXPRESS READ

Odisha boy survives with a javelin in his neck

Bhubaneswar: A 14-yr-old boy had a close shave after a javelin passed right through his chin, but missed the most vital organ - the wind pipe, by centimetres. P5

K'taka helping farmers increase income: Min

Bengaluru: Karnataka government is taking several steps to help farmers increase their income through processing, branding and marketing | Full interview P4

BMTC digital ticketing system soon

AKNISREE KARTHIK @ Bengaluru

COMMUTERS no longer need to carry coins while boarding BMTC buses. Starting December 23, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) is all set to roll out a UPI-based ticketing system. Passengers can also use their credit and debit cards to buy tickets. The transport corporation has said that tickets will be generated only for a successful transaction and in case of a technical error or a failed transaction, a physical ticket will have to be purchased by paying cash.

Speaking to TNSE, BMTC Director (IT) Surya Sen said, "We have procured Electronic Ticketing Machines (ETM) to roll out the UPI-based ticketing system. If all goes as planned, commuters can avail this service from December 23 onwards."

BMTC conductors will feed the destination name into the ETMs. The fare will be calculated automatically and a QR code will be generated. Commuters have to scan the QR code using their UPIs like Google Pay and Phone Pe and pay the amount. Purushothaman, a plumber, who regularly travels on BMTC buses, said, "It's a welcome move as we have got used to digital transactions as we don't have to keep running to ATMs to withdraw cash".

FIRST ALL-CIVILIAN TRIP

Meet the Indian star reaching for the moon

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

JAPANESE entrepreneur, billionaire Yusaku Maezawa last weekend announced the 'dream crew' for the first all civilian mission to the moon - 'dearMoon' which includes Indian actor **Dev Joshi** of 'Balveer' fame among the eight people.

This is the first civilian mission to the moon, planned to take place sometime in the last quarter of 2023. The rocket developed by Elon Musk's SpaceX will make a week-long journey to the moon, orbit it without landing on the surface, and return to earth.

In 2018, Maezawa purchased eight seats aboard the rocket, planning to give an opportunity to as many talented individuals from across the world. Dev was one of the eight selected.

Dev is barely able to hold his excitement at being shortlisted for the dearMoon mission. "It is a landmark project and being a part of this crew makes me feel really proud and thrilled! Also, being the youngest person of the crew and only Indian on the team, this feels like a responsibility. I am glad to embrace it representing my generation and my country," said Dev in an exclusive chat with *The New Sunday Express*.

Dev, while speaking on making it through the selection process — for which the organisers had received more than one million applications from 249 countries and regions — said the process was "very exciting and a journey in-itself. We had many interviews, meetings, and phases of medical assessments to clear. Also, I met Mr Yusaku Maezawa during the final phases and we had some really fun conversations."

The actor said he applied for the dearMoon project, as it was really appealing to him. "I have always been excited about space and related updates. I was shooting on my sets of 'Baalveer Returns,' when I saw the announcement of this project". P10

Championing the pursuit of truth since 2011

Mumbai Press Club congratulates the winners of the RedInk Awards 2022 for their compelling stories that shine a light on the truth, no matter how dark the times.

The RedInk Awards 2022 Winners

Journalist of the Year
Om Gaur - Dainik Bhaskar Group

Business & Economy
Anu Abraham - Mathrubhumi *(Print/Online)*
Sonali Shinde - SAAM TV *(Television/Video)*

Crime
Angana Chakrabarti - The Print *(Print/Online)*
Anurag Dwary - NDTV *(Television/Video)*

Lifestyle & Entertainment
Jane Borges - Mid-Day *(Print/Online)*

Environment
Sushmita - The Caravan *(Print/Online)*
Tridip Kanti Mandal - The Quint *(Television/Video - Joint Winner)*
Dominic Savio Diengdoh - The Quint *(Television/Video - Joint Winner)*

Health & Wellness
Aatreyee Dhar - Down to Earth *(Print/Online)*
Barkha Dutt - Mojo Story *(Television/Video)*

Human Rights
Kirti Dubey - BBC World *(Print/Online)*
Aravind Venugopal - Malayala Manorama *(Television/Video)*

Politics
Vaibhav Walunj - Indiejournal Media LLP *(Print/Online - Joint Winner)*
Siddharth Varadarajan - The Wire *(Print/Online - Joint Winner)*
Jugal Purohit - BBC News Hindi *(Television/Video)*

Science & Innovation
Karishma Mehrotra - Scroll.in *(Print/Online)*

Sports
Bhavya Dore - Mint Lounge *(Print/Online)*
Vandna - BBC News Hindi *(Television/Video)*

The Arts
Vinay Aravind - Fifty Two *(Print/Online)*
Namdev Anant Katkar - BBC World *(Television/Video)*

The Big Picture
Winner: T P Sooraj - The New Indian Express
Runner-up: Jinse Michael - Malayala Manorama

Women Empowerment & Gender Equality
Sukanya Shanth - The Wire *(Print/Online)*
Aishwarya S Iyer - The Quint *(Television/Video)*

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